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Assistance in mine action

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Report of the Secretary-General*

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* The need to request and incorporate input from a variety of organizations within and outside the United Nations system delayed the finalization of the present report. With regard to future report submissions, steps will be taken to ensure that delays are minimized.

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I. Introduction

1. The issue of mine action has been on the agenda of the General Assembly since 1993. Most recently, in its resolution 55/120 of 6 December 2000, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-sixth session a comprehensive report on the United Nations mine-action policy, including the progress achieved on relevant issues outlined both in his previous reports to the Assembly on assistance in mine clearance and mine action and in resolution 55/120, as well as the progress made by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other international and regional organizations as well as national programmes, and on the operation of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action and other mine-action programmes. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request. It highlights key developments, achievements and challenges encountered by the mine-action community in 2001, with an emphasis on cross-cutting issues of concern to all partners involved in the fight against landmines: global coordination and resource mobilization; assistance to national and local authorities; emergency assistance; information management; quality control, training and standards; and advocacy.

II. The year in review: a summary

2. Significant progress has been made over the past 12 months in the field of mine action, particularly in terms of strategic planning, operational support, coordination and information management. At the same time, the efforts of the international community are being challenged in several parts of the world, with new landmines continuing to be laid in several countries. Areas of particular concern from a humanitarian point of view include Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sri Lanka and the Sudan. Several of the developments recorded in this brief review are presented in more detail in subsequent sections of the report.

Strategic planning

3. The most notable development of the year, with regard to strategic planning, is the formulation of a five-year strategy for mine action by the United Nations system. The strategy complements the mine-action policy presented to the General Assembly in 1998 (A/53/496, annex II), articulates a vision for the future and identifies tangible and measurable objectives to be achieved. The purpose is to provide a transparent framework for action and ensure that United Nations mine-action efforts are guided by common objectives. The strategy takes into account the views and expectations of a broad range of partners, including international organizations, mine-affected countries, donor countries and non-governmental organizations. Once finalized, it will be circulated as addendum 1 to the present report (see also para. 96 below).

Operational support

4. The United Nations system is now providing direct support to 30 countries, as compared to 26 in 2000. New assistance programmes include Ethiopia and Guinea-Bissau, initiated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as emergency programmes in southern Lebanon and in the temporary security zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In the latter two instances, the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat has established coordination mechanisms to address the immediate requirements of local populations, aid agencies and peacekeeping forces, while UNDP is working in parallel with the Governments concerned to lay the foundations for longer-term mine-action efforts. Both the Mine Action Service and UNDP have chosen the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) as their executing partner in these countries. In the case of southern Lebanon, the very generous offer made by the Government of the United Arab Emirates of financial assistance to clear the mines laid over the past 26 years of internal and external conflicts is noted with appreciation.

5. While new programmes have been initiated, two existing programmes, in Croatia and Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), have reached the stage where the level of United Nations and international technical assistance can be significantly reduced. In Croatia, the Croatian Mine Action Centre is already a fully operational national mine-action entity and receives 80 per cent of its funds from the Croatian Government. However, UNDP continues to provide support in the implementation of International Mine Action Standards and assists in operational planning, where necessary.

By the end of December 2001, the Croation Mine Action Centre should be capable of conducting all aspects of mine action, independent of external technical assistance. At this date, however, more than 4,000 square kilometres of potentially mine-affected areas will remain to be cleared, requiring continued financial assistance.

6. In Kosovo, with continued and adequate support from the donor community, all known mine-contaminated areas should be cleared by the end of 2001. It will then be possible to close the Mine Action Coordination Centre of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and to transfer the responsibility for dealing with the residual threat of mines and unexploded ordnance to the central administrative structures of the province, principally the Department for Civil Security and Emergency Preparedness.

7. Building on lessons learned from the Kosovo, southern Lebanon, Ethiopia and Eritrea experiences, as well as other situations, the United Nations has begun to develop a mine action emergency response plan. This plan should enable the Organization, together with its international partners, to provide a more timely and effective mine-action response to humanitarian and peacekeeping emergencies in the future. The aim is to ensure the rapid deployment of appropriate resources to humanitarian emergency situations, or as part of peacekeeping operations at short notice, in order to address immediate mine-action priorities. This development is in line with the conclusions of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809 dated 21 August 2000).

8. Another significant operational development of the past 12 months relates to mine-action quality management. Revised International Mine Action Standards have been developed under the auspices of the United Nations, with the instrumental support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. They will replace the International Standards for Humanitarian Mine Clearance Operations published in 1997. The revised standards take into account the wealth of experience accumulated by the global mine-action community over the past years, and cover activities which previously had not been addressed, such as mine awareness and stockpile destruction. An extensive series of regional outreach workshops have been organized in various parts of the world to present the new standards and obtain feedback from mine-action practitioners. Based on the results of the outreach programme, an initial set of 22 standards was endorsed by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action in September 2001.

Coordination and information

9. The enhancement of appropriate information management systems has therefore continued to be a priority for the United Nations. In September 2001, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group endorsed the Information Management Policy for Mine Action. The Information Management System for Mine Action, developed under a collaborative arrangement between the Mine Action Service and the Geneva Centre, has been further improved. It is now in place in 17 countries throughout the world.

10. Building on the Information Management System for Mine Action and other information tools, the United Nations has now developed an Electronic Mine Information Network (E-MINE), which provides a web-based gateway to a broad range of mine-related information collected and managed by the United Nations and other partners, in support of field programmes, public advocacy and strategic planning. The first version of E-MINE was launched in September 2001. Member States, international organizations and mine action partners are all invited to contribute information to this project.

Advocacy

11. Since the entry into force in March 1999 of the Convention on the Prohibition, Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines have dramatically reduced. Twenty more Member States have become party to the Convention since September last year. Most States, which are not party to the treaty, have de facto ceased to use, stockpile, produce and transfer anti-personnel landmines. These remarkable achievements notwithstanding, landmines continue to be deployed, at great risk to local populations, in a number of active conflicts. Advocacy against the use of anti-personnel landmines remains a priority for the Secretary-General and a moral imperative for the international community at large.

III. Thematic issues

A. Global coordination and resource mobilization

12. As the focal point within the United Nations system for all mine-related activities, the Mine Action Service is responsible for coordinating an effective international response to the problems posed by landmine contamination. To fulfil its role, the Mine Action Service relies primarily on two mechanisms, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action and the Steering Committee on Mine Action, both chaired by the Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations or by the Chief of the Service at the working level. While the former mechanism is a United Nations inter-agency forum, the latter promotes the coordination of United Nations mine-action initiatives with those of other partners and includes ICRC, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and other non-governmental organizations, in addition to United Nations mine-action entities.

The Steering Committee on Mine Action

13. While inter-agency meetings have taken place on a regular basis, the Steering Committee had not met regularly in recent years. Special focus has therefore been given in 2001 to reviving the Committee. Meetings were held in May and September 2001, at which the following topics were addressed: the landmine problems in Eritrea and Kosovo; the emergency response plan, explosive remnants of war; and the possibility of using a universal mine-action logo in support of advocacy initiatives. In the future, meetings will be held at least twice a year.

Establishment of a mine-awareness working group

14. The annual international meeting of mine action programme directors and advisers held in Geneva in February 2001 recognized the need to fully integrate mine awareness into mine-action programmes and proposed the establishment of a consultative body related specifically to mine awareness, called the Mine Awareness Working Group. Comprised of mine-awareness practitioners, mainly from the field, but also representing the United Nations, ICRC, non-governmental organization headquarters, independent expert bodies, such as the Geneva Centre, as well as others, the Working Group held its first meeting in May 2001. Chaired by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and operating under the auspices of the Steering Committee on Mine Action, the aim of the Working Group is to support the development of mine awareness, including awareness of unexploded ordnance, or risk-reduction education programmes by identifying resource, training and support needs, and developing strategies to meet them. The Working Group is expected to meet three times a year at different regional centres, with locations chosen to provide opportunities for cross-programme learning.

Annual international meeting of mine action programme directors and advisers

15. The annual meeting of all national directors and programme advisers for United Nations-supported mine-action programmes has been organized with the generous support of the Geneva Centre and continues to be an important venue for strengthening cooperation with national authorities, for consultation and information exchange. Representatives of 21 mine-affected countries, along with staff from United Nations agencies, the World Bank, non-governmental organizations and observers attended. The participants discussed issues related to information management, resource mobilization and cost-effective capacity-building in mine-affected countries, as well as matters concerning victim assistance and mine awareness. For the first time, the meeting also provided an opportunity for representatives of donor countries to share information about their funding processes and to discuss country programmes directly with the national programme directors and their advisers.

Resource mobilization

16. Timely mobilization of resources from donors is essential to the success of mine-action programmes. Since the vast majority of humanitarian mine-action activities are funded from voluntary contributions, an effective and well coordinated funding strategy between the United Nations, donor Governments and other sources is required.

Portfolio of mine-related projects

17. Since 1998, the Mine Action Service has been coordinating the production of the annual Portfolio of Mine-related Projects — designed both for sharing

information and mobilizing resources. In 2001, significant changes were made to the Portfolio to improve its value. As in previous years, the 2001 Portfolio outlines the broad range of mine-action programmes and projects supported by the various entities of the United Nations system, containing proposals for 31 countries. In an attempt to present the country projects in a broader humanitarian and socio-economic context and to define the United Nations support strategy for each affected region, the 2001 Portfolio, for the first time, also includes country briefs. These briefs are intended to help the understanding of linkages among the individual projects, as well as between mine-action projects and other humanitarian and development activities.

18. In addition, the Mine Action Service is developing an electronic version (database) of the Portfolio. This will allow country programmes to update their information themselves and in an online system. It will also provide the basis for the future expansion of the Portfolio to include projects from non-governmental organizations and other entities outside the United Nations.

Inter-agency consolidated appeals and the Central Emergency Revolving Fund

19. Resource mobilization for mine-action activities continues to be included as part of the inter-agency consolidated appeals process compiled by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to address humanitarian emergencies. In 2001, mine-action projects were included in the appeals process for seven countries and regions.

20. In situations where an emergency cash flow is required to ensure rapid response to humanitarian emergencies, including mine action, funds from the Central Emergency Revolving Fund can be accessed on a reimbursable basis. In 2001, US$ 1,250,000 was advanced to the Mine Action Service to support emergency mine-action activities in Eritrea and Kosovo.

Round-table and country-level appeals

21. For longer term programmes, the traditional resource mobilization mechanisms also come into play. Country teams and Governments endeavour to make mine action a part of round tables and even consultative groups, and it is typically a part of all country-level appeals. In 2000, through these mechanisms, for example, UNDP mobilized over US$ 33 million in cost-sharing and contributions to trust funds.

"Adopt-A-Minefield" partnership

22. Based on a partnership agreement between UNDP and the United Nations Association of the United States of America, the Adopt-A-Minefield campaign has made significant progress in seeking national and international sponsors to "adopt" minefields in urgent need of clearance within United Nations-supported programmes. By the end of May 2001, over $US 2.7 million had been transferred to UNDP for clearance tasks in the five programme countries: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Croatia and Mozambique. It is anticipated that the programme will be expanded, by the end of 2001, to include Viet Nam. In efforts to transmit the landmine message to communities outside the United States and to raise funds for mine clearance and survivor assistance projects on a more global scale, the Adopt-A-Minefield campaign grew in 2001 to include two new satellite campaign partnerships: Adopt-A-Minefield (Canada) and Adopt-A-Minefield (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

Overall mine-action investments

23. The Database of Mine Action Investments was launched in November 1999 to track the flow of resources to mine-action programmes. It indicates that funding for mine action has regularly increased over the past four years. Based on data provided by more than ten major donors, mine-action investments increased by 26 per cent between 1998 and 1999, and by 21 per cent between 1999 and 2000. An estimated US$ 200 million is now invested in mine-action assistance by the international community every year. Of this total, approximately 40 per cent is channelled through the United Nations system and used primarily to finance field activities. However, these investments are still too limited to meet the needs of affected countries and communities, and to enable Member States to fully comply with their international obligations. A total of US$ 151 million is requested from donors in the 2001 Portfolio. Of this, US$ 74 million had been raised by 30 April 2001.

B. Assistance to national and local authorities

24. For countries where the scale of mine contamination is widespread and severe, the key issues are not only those of rapid mine clearance of given areas for humanitarian purposes. Sustainability of mine action over the longer term, which involves such issues as national ownership and capacity-building, is equally important. Within the United Nations system, UNDP is the entity responsible for addressing the socio-economic consequences of landmine contamination, as well as for supporting national and local capacity-building to ensure the elimination of the obstacles posed by landmines to the resumption of normal economic activity. In the past 12 months, UNDP has continued to assist the Governments of 16 affected countries to assume overall responsibility, coordination and management of national mine-action programmes. In carrying out its support tasks, UNDP coordinates closely with the Mine Action Service, other United Nations partners, the World Bank, non-governmental organizations and donors, often employing UNOPS as an executing partner.

25. Currently, UNDP supports mine-action programmes in 16 countries. During the reporting period, new programmes were launched to assist Governments in Albania, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon and Thailand to tackle the landmine problem in their respective countries, while assistance to the more established programmes in Angola, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Croatia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Somalia, and Yemen was continued. In Egypt, UNDP established a new mine action trust fund to support the development of the mine clearance system in that country. Projects in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sri Lanka were closed although, in both cases, discussions are under way to renew limited activities in the near future. UNDP provides advice to the Governments of those countries in areas such as capacity-building, technical matters, training, resource mobilization, addressing the socio-economic impact of landmines and advocacy for a fully integrated approach to mine action. The resources required to effectively execute these programmes are almost exclusively extrabudgetary contributions mobilized through existing appeal mechanisms and channelled through country trust funds and/or cost-sharing arrangements. The irregular and unpredictable flow of such funds poses a constant challenge to UNDP in effectively carrying out its mine-action support programmes and responsibilities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

26. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the National Demining Commission, the responsible State-level body, was transferred from a relatively independent position to a new location within the Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications. This has brought mine action clearly under the control of a single minister and has created a better positioning of mine action within the national agenda. The current set-up ensures that mine action can function more effectively in the future.

Cambodia

27. In Cambodia, following two major evaluations of the Cambodian Mine Action Centre programme, the most important reform was the establishment, in September 2000, of a new authority to manage, coordinate and regulate the mine-action sector: the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority. By the end of 2000, national ownership in mine action had been significantly enhanced, roles of various agencies had been clarified, the Cambodian Mine Action Centre was restructured and donor confidence had steadily returned. In late February 2001, the Government and UNDP launched a comprehensive evaluation of the programme of support to mine action over the last three years, followed by a formulation exercise for a new programme of support over the period 2001-2005. This new programme now has been finalized and signed. UNDP will support the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority in preparing an institutional development and capacity-building plan and the development of a national mine-action strategy.

Croatia

28. In Croatia, the UNDP project, entitled "Support to the Croatian Mine Action Centre" redefined its project goals to focus on key areas, such as improving the management structure and functions within the Croatian Mine Action Centre. As a result, the Mine Action Centre now includes a Quality Management Programme, which is improving the procedures and the training of individuals who hold critical positions in the Centre. One success in this area has been the acceptance of a more decentralized approach to

managing and conducting all phases of mine action. Ultimately, this should result in more efficient and effective operations. By the end of December 2001, the requirement for United Nations assistance to the Mine Action Centre is expected to end.

Mozambique

29. In August 2000, the Government of Mozambique and UNDP signed a capacity-building project in support of the National Demining Institute. The project seeks to assist the Institute in fulfilling its mandate as the governmental body responsible for coordination, prioritization and management of mine action. A national landmine impact survey has been completed and will constitute the basis of the first national plan for mine action, a milestone for mine action in Mozambique. The plan will identify the impact of landmines on development, how the problem will be addressed and the resources required. This plan will improve prioritization of tasks, cost-effectiveness and resource mobilization. UNICEF has supported the National Demining Institute in the development of a policy for civic education.

Global projects

30. Since all mine-action programmes are in constant evolution, new challenges and needs to assist national and local authorities appear regularly. During the reporting period, UNDP, in cooperation with other key players, including the Geneva Centre, the World Rehabilitation Fund, the Survey Action Centre and Cranfield University (United Kingdom), made progress in responding to such needs by carrying out a number of detailed global projects. These studies are designed to assist authorities and Governments in humanitarian demining activities, by providing them with improved guidance and support.

Socio-economic impact study

31. UNDP commissioned the Geneva Centre to conduct an assessment of the socio-economic impact of mine action to help national and local authorities and their national mine-action programmes to prioritize their activities, to provide better information on their impact and to allocate resources more effectively. The study was conducted through research, as well as case studies, in Kosovo (emergency), Mozambique (transition society) and the Lao People's Democratic Republic (development). *A Study of Socio-Economic Approaches to Mine Action* was formally released in May 2001 at the Inter-sessional meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Geneva. The main lessons drawn from the study are that mine-action managers need to integrate the principal social and economic features of the mine-affected countries and their communities into the planning process and consider mines within the context of other factors that limit economic growth and bind people in poverty. Mine action that addresses these binding constraints should be accorded priority. An operational handbook was field tested in Bosnia during June 2001 and will be completed by late September 2001.

Socio-economic reintegration of landmine victims

32. The World Rehabilitation Fund was contracted by UNDP to execute a three-year project for the socio-economic reintegration of landmine victims, commencing in May 1999. Its aim is to establish an integrated approach to dovetail the physical and psychosocial rehabilitation of landmine victims (largely the domain of other agencies, including UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and ICRC) with the need to provide alternative livelihoods, to secure full participation of landmine victims in their communities and, in the process, the socio-economic recovery and development of their communities. Following field research and identification of needs, the Fund initiated partnerships with a number of locally based non-governmental organizations in Cambodia, Lebanon and Mozambique to conduct a variety of pilot projects. It also developed a framework on socio-economic integration of landmine survivors to serve as a guide for identifying and analysing such reintegration opportunities. This framework has been converted into draft guidelines for the use of Governments in developing policies and programmes to promote socio-economic integration of landmine survivors. The guidelines were distributed at the most recent meeting of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance, held in Geneva in May 2001.

Impact surveys

33. The concept of the "impact survey" was developed in order to measure the impact of mine contamination on civilian populations. By collating and

analysing topographic and socio-economic data, impact surveys identify the scale of the landmine problem down to the community level. Their focus is on community perception of the social and economic impact of mines within their communities. The Mine Action Service and UNDP are partners with the Survey Action Centre, a consortium of non-governmental organizations managed by the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, to perform impact surveys as an integrated component of mine-action programmes in several countries. Collectively, these partners are involved (either directly, or by providing quality assurance) in surveys in Cambodia, Chad, Mozambique and Thailand. The impact survey in Yemen was completed in September 2000. The surveys in Chad, Mozambique and Thailand will be completed by the end of 2001, and the one in Cambodia, in early 2002. Discussions are under way to provide support for additional surveys in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Lebanon and Somalia.

34. During the reporting period, with funding secured by UNDP, the Survey Action Centre and the Cranfield University Mine Action Management Programme expanded the standard landmine impact survey process to include a strategic national planning tool, entitled "Pathway".

Stockpile destruction

35. At a senior management-level meeting of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action held in September 2000, the need to include the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel landmines as a fifth core component within the United Nations definition of mine action was recognized and agreed upon.

36. As part of the review process of the International Mine Action Standards, which is being conducted through a partnership arrangement between the United Nations and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, official Mine Action Standards for stockpile destruction programmes have been formulated. These standards seek to inform national authorities of the technical and logistic issues involved in anti-personnel mine stockpile destruction. They are based on the comprehensive guidelines for the destruction of stockpiles as drafted by UNDP and endorsed by the United Nations.

37. In addition, a web site on stockpile destruction has been created as an in-kind donation by the Government of Canada to the United Nations, to facilitate the sharing of information on the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines globally, and to better facilitate cooperation between States that need assistance to destroy their stockpiles, and States as well as organizations that are offering their support. The international mine-action community can use this as a resource for sharing experience, expertise and information on all matters relating to stockpile destruction.

38. In November 2000, Argentina and Canada, in collaboration with the Organization of American States and the United Nations, organized a seminar on stockpile destruction for the Americas in Buenos Aires. In addition, in February 2001, Hungary and Canada co-organized a seminar on the destruction of the PFM1 mine, which was held in Budapest. This was a technical seminar aimed at gathering scientific data on the PFM1-type mine, data that will be essential in establishing a process for the mine's destruction. In July 2001, another regional seminar on stockpile destruction was held in Kuala Lumpur.

C. Emergency assistance

Southern Lebanon

39. Recognizing the humanitarian nature of the landmine and unexploded ordnance problem in Lebanon, the Security Council, in resolution 1337 (2001), urged the international community to respond to Lebanon's call for assistance in mine action. The immediate requirement was to speed up the process of mine and unexploded ordnance clearance, particularly in the south. Accordingly, over the past 12 months, the United Nations has provided a channel for international assistance in mine action to the Government of Lebanon, in support of the development of its national capacity and for emergency demining activities in the south.

40. An outline strategy for United Nations assistance in mine action in Lebanon was launched at an international high-level workshop held in Lebanon in May 2001, where the United Arab Emirates confirmed generous financial support for mine clearance. The United Nations strategy is designed to assist the Government, and in particular, the National Demining Office, to build on existing capacity. The programme of support will focus on what can be realistically achieved

in the short term to implement mine action on the ground and to enhance national capacity, in order to provide a medium to longer-term sustainable response. Central to this programme of support is the involvement of the National Demining Office as the national authority responsible for mine action on behalf of the Government.

41. The Mine Action Coordination Cell of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), based in Tyre, supports the National Demining Office in relation to mine-action operations in the south. The Coordination Cell collects and processes minefield information, assists the National Demining Office to set priorities for clearance in the south and facilitates effective operational coordination between the Office and the Lebanese Army Units, on the one hand, and the peacekeeping force and other actors in the UNIFIL area of operation, on the other. Ukrainian and Finnish forces are conducting mine-clearance operations in support of UNIFIL objectives. Support to the National Demining Office in strengthening Lebanese national capacity for mine action is being provided by UNDP. The Information Management System for Mine Action has become operational in the National Demining Office in Beirut in June 2001, with support provided by the Geneva Centre, and a Landmine Impact Survey is expected to begin later in 2001.

Temporary security zone between Eritrea and Ethiopia

42. Following the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed by Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Security Council, in resolutions 1312 (2000) and 1344 (2001), called upon the parties to the conflict to facilitate emergency mine-action assistance in coordination with the United Nations. Mine-action activities for 2001 have been to establish an emergency programme and to define the long-term requirement for United Nations involvement.

43. A rapid landmine survey was completed at the end of 2000 by a British non-governmental organization, HALO Trust, and has been used in the past six months as the basis for initial mine-action operations. The Mine Action Coordination Centre of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) has been established with a mandate that includes: coordination of humanitarian mine-action activities in the temporary security zone and adjacent areas, as well as responsibility to assist Eritrea and Ethiopia in fulfilling their mine-action obligations under the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. Current operational assets include the HALO Trust, with clearance, awareness and survey teams and mechanical equipment, Danish Church Aid, which is involved in the training and employment of local deminers and the Danish Demining Group. Mine-clearance capacity in support of UNMEE objectives is also available with specialized contingents from Bangladesh, Kenya and Slovakia. In a complementary effort, UNDP, with the support of UNOPS, is providing assistance to the Governments of Eritrea and Ethiopia in developing their own national mine-action programmes.

44. The return of large numbers of internally displaced persons to the temporary security zone and the insufficient capability to mark and clear dangerous areas prior to their return have created a serious problem. The Eritrean Government is placing high priority on the early return of internally displaced persons to the temporary security zone, despite the fact that many of the areas of return are mined. While mine-clearance operations are well under way and the Mine Action Coordination Centre is cooperating with the Government and non-governmental organizations to speed up the deployment of deminers to the extent possible, a concerted international effort will be required to ensure safe returns to many contaminated areas prior to the 2002 planting season.

Kosovo

45. Kosovo's integrated mine-action programme is now entering its final stages. Subject to the continued availability of the required resources, the clearance of known minefields is expected to be completed by 1 December 2001. Areas affected by cluster bombs dropped by the forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will, at a minimum, have been surface-cleared by that time, with the majority of areas having been fully cleared to a depth of 50 centimetres. Some items of ordnance are expected to be found in the future, but the problem will be manageable by the local authorities.

46. A plan to transfer all mine-action responsibilities to the local authorities by the end of 2001, an "exit strategy", is now being devised. Once mine/unexploded ordnance-clearance is completed to an acceptable level, the structure of the UNMIK Mine Action Coordination Centre will have achieved its goal and will no longer

be required. The strategy envisages devolving responsibility for the various components of mine action to the appropriate local government departments created by UNMIK under the Joint Interim Administrative Structure. Under the overall coordination of the Department for Civil Security and Emergency Preparedness, responsibility for dealing with mines and unexploded ordnance will be transferred to the Kosovo Protection Corps, responsibility for information management to the Department of Public Services, responsibility for mine awareness to the Department of Education and Science and responsibility for victim assistance to the Department of Health and Social Welfare. Detailed plans are being developed for each of those areas. The development of the institutional arrangements in the various local government departments is occurring in parallel with the existing programme and responsibility will be progressively transferred as the systems are established. Interdepartmental coordination on mine-action matters will be assured under the arrangements developed for provisional self-government detailed in the Constitutional Framework.

Afghanistan

47. Afghanistan remains one of the countries most severely affected by landmines and unexploded ordnance in the world. Commencing its operations in 1989, the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan comprises the Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan, four United Nations Regional Mine Action Centres and fifteen implementing partners (non-governmental organizations). The overall objective of the programme is to support the aid community's efforts to alleviate the human suffering of the people of Afghanistan by making the country safe from the threat of mines and explosive devices.

48. The Programme focused much of its efforts in 2001 on reinforcing the existing programme. While facing constant challenges in working around an ongoing conflict and the relaying of mines in some areas, the Mine Action Centre expanded to a workforce of over 4,700 Afghan personnel. It technically surveyed and marked some 25 square kilometres of mine-contaminated land and cleared over 23 square kilometres of high priority land. In addition, new refugee influxes in the west and north required emergency clearance of routes and emergency implementation of mine-awareness programmes in camps and along routes. The Programme is now preparing to convert its information management system to the Information Management System for Mine Action. The Survey Action Centre, the Geneva Centre, Cranfield University and the Mine Action Service will assist in this conversion process, as well as in the conduct of a landmine impact survey.

Northern Iraq

49. Launched in 1997, under the auspices of the Office of the Iraq Programme and the former Mine Clearance and Policy Unit of the Department for Humanitarian Affairs (the responsibilities of which have now been transferred to the Mine Action Service), the northern Iraq Mine Action Programme is executed by UNOPS, with funding from the "Oil for Food" programme. Because of the unique nature of the programme, and the fact that the United Nations is mandated to execute mine action only in northern Iraq, a national Mine Action Centre was not established.

50. The northern Iraq Programme has expanded rapidly over the past three and a half years. An integrated toolbox of demining assets (including manual deminers, mine-detection dogs and mechanical ground preparation systems), an extensive victim assistance programme and the beginnings of an effective mine-awareness programme are in place. Since its beginning in 1997, to the third quarter of 2001, mine-clearance activities have cleared and returned to productive use nearly eight square kilometres of land, two thirds of which was completed during the period 2000-2001. Now, with increased levels of funding, first received at the end of 1999, the Programme has begun medium-term mine-action planning and implementation. It now has the necessary resources to address the problem from a more strategic angle. The 2001 strategic planning process introduced a paradigm shift in the Mine Action Programme, which has resulted in shifting the focus from the minefields to impacted communities, so as to ensure balance and sustainability of the programme and to achieve the highest impact for affected communities.

Other areas of concern

51. Other areas of particular concern from a humanitarian point of view include Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka and the Sudan. Mine-action efforts in settings where there are still active conflicts

and where mines are still being deployed require careful adherence to humanitarian principles. In such contexts, the focus is mainly on information management, mine awareness and minefield marking. These activities are uncontroversial and can have an immediate impact on the population that is most at risk, even while the conflict continues.

52. Angola is one of the countries most seriously affected by landmines. In a 16-month period between mid-1998 and January 2000, it is estimated that 1,117 Angolans fell victim to landmines and unexploded ordnance. The development of the mine-action assistance programme initiated in 1994 by the United Nations and subsequently transferred to UNDP has been seriously hampered by the resumption of hostilities at the end of 1998, with new mines being laid. A UNDP capacity-building project was scaled back in 2000 for lack of funds. UNDP continues to support a project to collect, analyse and disseminate mine-action information, including the maintenance of a central mine-action database. Significant mine-action activities continue, implemented mainly by international non-governmental organizations. UNICEF continues to conduct relevant mine-awareness activities.

53. In Burundi too, landmines remain a serious threat to the local population in the border area with the United Republic of Tanzania. In April 2001, following severe fighting on the outskirts of Bujumbura, UNICEF established an emergency mine-awareness programme for the displaced population. Building on this successful intervention, it intends to develop the technical capacity of the Government to implement mine awareness in affected provinces. It will also support the Government in establishing a national victim surveillance network. A central database will eventually be set up in Bujumbura, accessible for effective planning and advocacy.

54. In the Republic of Ingushetia of the Russian Federation, United Nations agencies agree on the need to intensify the humanitarian response to the threat posed by landmines to the civilian population in the neighbouring republic of Chechnya. As a first step, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), ICRC and non-governmental organization partners, in collaboration with the local authorities, have initiated a programme to promote mine and unexploded ordnance-awareness education among displaced persons, particularly children. Security permitting, UNICEF is prepared to lead the effort to coordinate mine-action activities that will include mine-awareness education, information gathering, victim assistance and vocational training.

55. In regard to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Security Council, in its resolution 1291 (2000) included mine action as an integral component of the planned peace operation. In preparing to implement a comprehensive mine-action programme, as endorsed by the Security Council, the Mine Action Service is gathering information on the scope of the landmine problem, building upon the mine-action activities already initiated by Handicap International and planning an inter-agency assessment mission.

56. In Sri Lanka, UNDP provided technical assistance to a mine-action project in the northern district of Jaffna, to assist the resettlement of internally displaced persons in areas contaminated by landmines from the long-standing conflict between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) movement. The programme had to be suspended in April 2000, following resumption of large-scale hostilities in the area. However, UNICEF continues to assist indigenous mine-awareness programmes, both in Government and LTTE-controlled areas. In June 2001, the Mine Action Service conducted a fact-finding mission to Sri Lanka, in order to identify the scope for United Nations mine-action assistance under the prevailing circumstances.

57. In the Sudan, mines continue to be laid in the active combat zones in the south and east of the country. Mine-awareness activities are already taking place, with UNICEF working in collaboration with UNHCR, Oxfam, Radda Barnen and the Sudanese Red Crescent. In 2001, the United Nations sponsored a landmine and unexploded ordnance safety project for aid workers. In addition, the Mine Action Service and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are now developing plans for the opening of a Mine Action Unit within the office of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sudan, to develop an information management capacity and to coordinate mine awareness and victim assistance projects.

Development of a United Nations emergency response plan for mine-action assistance

58. The international community has recently been faced with several emergency situations, where the presence of landmines has been an obstacle to humanitarian relief efforts and/or peacekeeping deployments. Priorities for the provision of emergency assistance have often included mine clearance. Lack of a systematic process to plan for and deploy appropriate personnel and resources in such emergencies creates the risk that delivery of humanitarian aid or deployment of peacekeepers might be delayed.

59. Accordingly, in early 2001, the United Nations began to develop a plan for a rapid emergency mine-action response capability, building on lessons learned from support provided to missions, particularly in Kosovo and Eritrea and Ethiopia. Development of the plan in concert with similar efforts within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was a major topic for discussion at the meeting of the Steering Committee on Mine Action in May 2001. The aim is to enable the rapid deployment of appropriate resources to humanitarian emergency situations, or as part of peacekeeping operations, at short notice, in order to address immediate mine-action priorities.

60. The plan focuses on early reconnaissance, leading to the deployment of an appropriately configured coordination capacity in the early stages of an emergency and a range of mine-action capabilities that will be available to address the immediate threat in each situation. It proposes standby arrangements that will be developed with governmental, non-governmental and/or commercial organizations to ensure that these assets deploy on time, with the correct personnel and equipment to fulfil a clearly defined role. In this context, the Mine Action Service is currently in the process of establishing mine-action start-up kits. These kits will be kept at the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot in Brindisi, Italy, which is co-located with the United Nations Logistics Base which supports peacekeeping missions. They will be available by December 2001.

61. The plan will address the immediate mine-action priorities of a humanitarian emergency and will not attempt to plan beyond this stage of an operation. It will provide the resources, and create an environment in which longer-term planning can occur. The plan will include a number of optional capabilities, which can be deployed depending on the situation. This will ensure that the requisite level of detailed preparation can take place to enable a rapid response, while not limiting the options available.

D. Information management

62. Given the scope of the landmine problem, the wide range of issues to be taken into consideration and the growing number of actors involved, the role of the United Nations as a central repository of information for mine action is particularly critical. During the reporting period, work was undertaken to develop a more comprehensive information management system that effectively supports the mine-action community's activities and needs in the field and elsewhere. This will allow for more accurate and comprehensive monitoring, planning and programme implementation, at a national and international level. Once fully and effectively in place, such a management system will serve the needs of both the United Nations and other partners.

Creation of a United Nations information management policy for mine action

63. In recognition of the need to provide more guidance to a growing number of initiatives related to mine-action information management, priority has been given to the development of a United Nations policy on the subject. In consultation with United Nations agency partners, the information management policy for mine action was prepared and discussed at the International Meeting of Mine Action Programme Directors and Advisers in February 2001. The text was subsequently approved by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action in September 2001 and will be circulated as addendum 2 to the present report.

Further development of the Information Management System for Mine Action

64. In 1998, an agreement was concluded between the Mine Action Service and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to develop and maintain the Information Management System for Mine Action. The development of this system has been ongoing. The first phase of the project involved the development of the field module, designed for use within mine-affected countries, incorporating a database and Geographic Information System (GIS), to

store, process and analyse the information gathered during survey activities. This first phase was completed in 1999. As of May 2001, it is in place in 17 countries and regions: Albania, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Chad, Cyprus, Kosovo (the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), Ingushetia (the Russian Federation), Estonia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Nicaragua, north-west Somalia, Peru, southern Lebanon, Thailand and Yemen. By the end of 2001, the goal is to further improve the System's field module, to provide additional training to field users, and to complete its installation in ten additional countries.

65. In areas where existing information systems are already in place, efforts are under way to retrofit existing data into the System's structure, where appropriate. This is being considered on a case-by-case basis, with the aim of allowing greater coordination of global information analysis and dissemination. An important future objective is to have this information system, or an equivalent compatible system, deployed in all United Nations-supported programmes, with appropriate training provided to all users by the end of 2002.

66. While the Geneva Centre is responsible for the installation of and training on the System, the Mine Action Service is responsible for coordinating the process, setting priorities for development and installation, and ensuring that the proper hardware and software is available. The close and transparent cooperation between the two organizations in the area of information management benefits the international mine-action community in managing the vast amount of information related to mine action.

Initiation of a study into the information management needs of mine-action programmes

67. In order to guide the further development of the Information management System for Mine Action and of other information management systems for mine action, the United Nations has initiated a study into the future information system needs of mine-action programmes. The objectives are: to identify the information requirements of mine-action programmes to aid effective decision-making, operations and management; to clearly define the specific information system functionalities needed to meet each requirement; and to recommend priorities for development and implementation. The study is being executed in close consultation with ongoing mine-action programmes and the various organizations involved in the management of mine-related information. The results are expected by the end of March 2002 and will be made widely available.

Strategic mine-action planning

68. To assist countries in making the most of the data collected from completed impact surveys, the Cranfield Humanitarian Mine Action Unit, which is part of Cranfield University, in partnership with the Survey Action Centre and LandAir International, and with the support of UNDP, developed a strategic programme management information tool called "Pathway". This computer simulation programme supplements the Information Management System for Mine Action. It analyses the impact survey data in order to: assist with national mine-action programme design at both the regional and national levels; assist with the development of a national mine-action strategic plan based on the community needs identified in the impact survey, which also takes into account national development needs and other stakeholder priorities; and enable logical and verifiable work prioritization to take place.

69. In conjunction with UNDP capacity-building projects, the Cranfield University Mine Action Unit trains senior managers in mine-action centres in strategic planning and the use of "Pathway". A project was completed in Yemen in January 2001 and one in Chad is nearing completion. A "Pathway" project is now anticipated for all countries undertaking an impact survey, as an integral part of the survey process.

Electronic Mine Information Network (E-MINE) project

70. To support the United Nations role as central repository of mine-related information, as well as the United Nations information responsibilities under both the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, a new information project called E-MINE has been initiated. E-MINE is a web-based gateway that will give access to a series of new and existing databases, and support field operations, as well as public information and strategic planning. The

project involves a number of partners from the United Nations and outside. This new information network was publicly released in September 2001 at the http://www.mineaction.org web site.

E. Quality control, training and standards

Revised International Mine Action Standards

71. The International Standards for Humanitarian Mine Clearance Operations, originally produced by the United Nations in 1997, have undergone a comprehensive review over the past 12 months. The Mine Action Service entered into a collaborative arrangement with the Geneva Centre to implement the project, as a result of which, 27 new standards have been written and reviewed by a User Focus Group. The review project manager visited field programmes to discuss the initial drafts with potential users firsthand. Application of the standards was discussed in detail at numerous conferences and meetings throughout the review process. The first 22 standards, now referred to as the International Mine Action Standards, were endorsed by the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action in September 2001. They capture the wealth of experience accumulated by the global mine-action community over the past years, and will be made available to Member States as an official United Nations document during the course of 2002. However, they will only become authoritative in any given country if and when they are approved, in their totality or in part, by the Government of the country concerned.

Outreach programmes for the revised International Mine Action Standards

72. Regional workshops have been held to review the draft texts and to obtain the maximum commitment to the standards and to ensure that the revised standards are fully understood and accepted by all relevant actors and stakeholders. This extensive outreach consultation initiative involved Government representatives, field managers, non-governmental organizations and other relevant international organizations. Since February 2001, five outreach workshops have been held, in Croatia, Mozambique, Lebanon, Peru, and Thailand. Over 160 individuals from more than 20 organizations and national mine-action programmes attended the outreach workshops. Additional outreach programmes to promote adoption of the standards by Governments are planned.

73. The Mine Action Information Centre at James Madison University (United States of America), in cooperation with the Mine Action Service and the Geneva Centre, has agreed to maintain and update the global web site for the International Mine Action Standards. As newer versions are promulgated and other standards added, the site is updated and expanded to accommodate them.

Additional standards planned for other areas of mine action

74. While the current phase of the International Mine Action Standards project concentrates primarily on mine clearance-related issues, work is taking place simultaneously on additional standards and guidelines to cover related areas. UNICEF, in cooperation with the Mine Action Service and the Geneva Centre, is developing the standards for mine-awareness education. These standards will ensure that mine-awareness programmes are implemented according to set principles and procedures, which will allow for high quality performance, while still being flexible enough to reflect local cultures and influences. They will build upon and replace the existing International Guidelines for Landmine and Unexploded Ordnance Awareness Education.

75. Other areas for which new standards and guidelines are currently under development include mine-detection dogs, mechanical clearance, training and contracts.

Management training

76. Training is an essential component of overall quality management. In the past, neither national directors nor their staff have received regular, formal management training. Recognizing that such training is essential for effective mine-action programmes, UNDP undertook a study in 1999 to assess the global training needs for management and supervisory staff. As a result of this study, the Cranfield Humanitarian Mine Action Unit was contracted by UNDP in 2000 to develop a senior managers training course. Sixteen managers from 13 countries attended the pilot course conducted at Cranfield University in August and September 2000. The course succeeded in upgrading the skills of the participants, providing a forum for

exchange of experiences between programmes, and developing a real network between the participants, which has remained following the conclusion of the course. A second central course will be held in August and September 2001, and a number of regional courses are also planned. The high level of interaction between the national managers during the first pilot course prompted a proposal for south-south cooperation and a mine-action exchange programme, which is being executed by UNDP.

77. Module One of a middle management training course was piloted in Portuguese, in Maputo in June 2001, with participants from Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. The remaining three modules will be delivered in October 2001, and in March and June 2002. Additional middle management courses are planned for Afghanistan, Cambodia and the Balkans.

Programme management handbook

78. In cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, UNICEF, UNOPS and the World Bank, the Mine Action Service has initiated a "Mine action programming handbook" project. The handbook is intended to foster effective integration of mine action into wider humanitarian, development and peacekeeping initiatives. The focus will be on strategic planning and coordination, emphasizing how assets of various organizations can be combined and how the existing consultative mechanisms for coordination can be used to ensure effective mine action.

79. The programming handbook will provide guidance to mine-action staff, as well as to United Nations coordinators, non-governmental organizations and host Governments.

Landmine and unexploded ordnance safety project

80. Recognizing that landmine safety is an important issue for humanitarian professionals and peacekeepers working in affected countries during emergency operations, the United Nations began to address this issue through a Landmine and unexploded ordnance safety project. This initiative provides aid workers and peacekeepers with landmine and unexploded ordnance safety information and training. The first phase began in February 2000. The project activities are coordinated by the Mine Action Service, monitored by an inter-agency group of experts, and implemented by UNOPS, with the help of project focal points in the field. The achievements of the first project phase include the production of 25,000 safety handbooks, 300 safety videos, 29,000 country-specific leaflets, 105 training modules and the conduct of 6 regional safety training workshops, in which 85 participants from 74 organizations participated. Funding is still being sought for the second project phase, which aims to strengthen existing project outputs, and cover 10 additional mine/unexploded ordnance-affected countries.

Technology

81. There is growing acceptance that a more universal application of available equipment, as well as the development of relevant new technologies, could enable mine action to be conducted more effectively and rapidly and with less risk. A number of studies and projects are ongoing, with the Mine Action Service and the Geneva Centre working in close cooperation. These include studies on mine dog detection and mechanical mine clearance, and a study on mine action equipment: the need for research and development. The Mine Action Information Centre at James Madison University conducted several international conferences in 2001, including a workshop on the subject of mine-detecting dogs.

F. Advocacy and treaty implementation

82. Advocacy, public information and consciousness-raising activities continue to play important parts in the international community's effort to rid the world of landmines. Many organizations continue to work together in efforts to universalize a worldwide ban on anti-personnel landmines and to ensure the full implementation of the Convention.

83. The number of ratifications and accessions to the Convention continues to grow steadily. Since September 2000, 20 countries have either acceded to or ratified it. As of 30 September 2001, there were 121 States Parties. While progress has been made in the ratification process, universalization remains a serious challenge.

84. In the context of global efforts to promote universalization, the Secretary-General and other senior officials continue to address the landmine issue when meeting with Heads of Member States and other

interested parties. In addition, various United Nations partners actively participate in international advocacy efforts. In March and June 2001, the Mine Action Service, UNDP and UNICEF attended meetings in Mali and Poland intended to promote understanding and implementation of the Convention in Africa and Eastern Europe, respectively.

85. Similarly, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines undertook missions and participated in meetings to promote the cause. Among these, the General Meeting of the Campaign, a biennial meeting of representatives of all national campaigns and member organizations was held in Washington, D.C. in March 2001. Some 160 participants from 80 country campaigns of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and representatives of international organizations attended, as well as 20 non-governmental organization observers from 10 additional countries. The Mine Action Service, UNDP and UNICEF also attended and gave presentations.

86. ICRC continues to be active in promoting adherence to and implementation of the Convention. In bilateral contacts with Governments, it encourages States not yet a party to the treaty to adhere as quickly as possible. It also organizes and participates in regional and national seminars on the Convention and other instruments governing landmines. In 2000, ICRC convened a meeting on anti-personnel mines in Abuja, Nigeria, for military and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials from that country. Participants from the Gambia, Ghana and Liberia also attended. ICRC also provides technical assistance and advice to countries on implementation issues, particularly on the drafting, adoption and amendment of national legislation to punish violations. It has recently produced an information kit on the development of national legislation to implement the treaty. The kit was prepared with the support of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Government of Belgium.

Second Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

87. With a growing understanding of the nature and scope of the mine problem taking root, and with the number of States parties to the Convention steadily increasing, more and more countries now face the need to implement the obligations of ratification. Accordingly, while advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines continues, efforts are now also concentrating on greater support for the implementation of specific treaty obligations.

88. The Second Meeting of the States Parties, held in September 2000 acknowledged the progress made during the inter-sessional work programme, which was created at the First Meeting of States Parties, held in January 2000, and decided to consolidate the programme in two ways: first, it was decided that three periods of meetings would be held annually, including the meeting of States parties. Each Standing Committee now meets twice between meetings of the States parties. Secondly, in the interest of promoting efficiency, the Standing Committees for mine clearance and technologies for mine action were combined into one Standing Committee.

89. At the Second Meeting of States Parties, it was further decided that the standard reporting format of article 7 (Transparency Measures) of the Convention, which was developed in consultation with States parties and adopted at the First Meeting of States Parties, be amended. It now includes an additional form "Form J: Other relevant matters." This form provides States parties with the opportunity to report voluntarily on matters pertaining to compliance and implementation that are not covered by the formal reporting requirements contained in article 7. In particular, it allows States Parties to report on activities undertaken with respect to article 6: on assistance provided for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims.

90. As at 15 August 2001, 65 States parties and Cameroon, which has not yet ratified the Convention, have transmitted their initial reports and updated reports under article 7. Among them, 13 reports include Form J.

IV. United Nations policy and strategy for mine action

A. United Nations policy on mine action

91. The United Nations mine-action policy document, entitled "Mine action and effective coordination: the United Nations policy" (A/53/496, annex II) continues to guide United Nations agencies and their key partners

in implementing their mine-action responsibilities. The policy continues to define, in the Secretary-General's view, the essential principles, under which the United Nations operates in the field of mine action and the roles to be played by the various entities of the United Nations system. It has been further elaborated in two areas. First, work has been done on the development of a United Nations mine-action strategy for 2001-2005 (A/56/448/Add.1), intended to turn the policy into concrete action, and secondly, the United Nations policy on information management for mine action (A/56/448/Add.2) has been developed.

92. The United Nations policy on mine action and effective coordination articulates the strong humanitarian platform from which the United Nations approaches mine action. The policy states, inter alia, that: landmines are first and foremost a humanitarian concern and must be addressed from this perspective. They are also an impediment to rehabilitation and sustainable (socio-economic) development. In dealing with the landmine problem, the United Nations will respect the fundamental humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and humanity so that priority is given to those who are most vulnerable. In order to receive assistance, relevant parties should be committed to supporting mine action actively, and to desisting from producing, stockpiling, using, and transferring anti-personnel landmines. Humanitarian mine-action activities which are focused on reducing immediate threats to the well-being of affected communities and to the activities of humanitarian workers should not be subjected to conditionalities related to the continuing use of landmines (see A/53/496, annex II, paras. 8, 10, 11 and 12).

93. According to the United Nations policy, the primary responsibility for taking action against the presence of landmines lies with the concerned State (Ibid., para. 23). In countries where the scale of mine contamination is widespread and severe, and where international support is required, the United Nations stands ready to assist in the development of national and local mine action programmes. In order to be effective, programmes in countries recovering from violent conflicts should be integrated into comprehensive strategies designed to support humanitarian action, peace-building, reconstruction and development.

94. To ensure the most efficient response to the landmine threat, Governments, international organizations and civil society must cooperate closely with one another. The United Nations is committed to working in partnership with all like-minded organizations that endorse these principles, and to promoting effective coordination between all parties.

B. Background on the United Nations strategy

95. As a result of the firm action taken by the international community, over the past five years in particular, significant achievements in ridding the world from the threat of landmines have been possible. These include:

(a) Most nations are in de facto compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition, Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines, and on Their Destruction and the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, resulting in a dramatic decline in the production, transfer, stockpiling and use of landmines;

(b) Public and political awareness of the landmine problem is widespread;

(c) Funding levels for mine action continue to be sustained and to increase;

(d) The development of new standards and mechanisms for mine action have strengthened international confidence in the integrity and value of mine action;

(e) Mine-action work of the meetings of States Parties and Standing Committees of the Convention on the Prohibition, Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, and of the Review Conferences and Preparatory Committees of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects has continued on a regular basis;

(f) Development of new mechanisms for coordination of donors and agencies, the establishment of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, and the initiatives by non-governmental organizations, such as ICRC and other mine-action

institutions, illustrate the vibrant support for mine action among Governments and civil society.

C. Development of a United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005

96. With these political, institutional and practical developments in place, and with a growing understanding of the nature and scope of the mine problem, the international mine-action community is now steadily moving from an approach that reacts to problems as they arise, to one in which mine-action issues are addressed strategically at the national and global levels.

97. In view of this, and in response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 55/120 that the Secretary-General develop further a comprehensive mine-action strategy, taking into consideration the impact of the landmine problem on rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, with a view to ensuring the effectiveness of assistance in mine action by the United Nations, the United Nations mine-action community, under the coordination of the Mine Action Service, began in March 2001 the process of formulating a comprehensive multi-year strategy for the performance of mine action over the medium term. Such a strategy is intended to facilitate planning and priority setting, based on a medium-term vision for integrated and coordinated mine action.

98. The strategy is contained in a clear, concise and inclusive document that effectively complements existing policies and guidelines. It presents a vision for the period until 2005, provides a framework for integrating all elements of mine action into a medium-term plan, and sets key goals and objectives for achievement during the period. It also reflects the continually evolving nature of mine action, the impact of new technologies and management techniques and developments in international standards and information technology. The objectives of the strategy are intended to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

99. The development of the strategy involved inputs from mine-affected countries, field programmes, the donor community and other interested partners, in order to ensure both open dialogue and ownership of the process and output.

100. The strategy was endorsed by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action in September 2001. It will be issued as addendum 1 to the present report.

V. Financial aspects

101. In its resolution 55/120, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to study how to secure a more sound financial basis for the Mine Action Service and to present options to this effect to the General Assembly.

102. The responsibilities of the Service in relation to mine action correspond closely to those of other Secretariat departments in relation to other comparable sectors of activity. Therefore, in paragraph 125 of his previous report to the General Assembly on assistance in mine action (A/55/542), the Secretary-General indicated that mine action should cease to be treated as a temporary requirement, and the Mine Action Service should be firmly established as a core function of the United Nations, with resources provided from assessed contributions.

103. A part of the core costs of the Service is already provided from assessed contributions under the Peacekeeping Support Account. The activities funded from this Account relate directly to the mine-action requirements of peacekeeping missions in the field. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, in its response to the report of the Secretary-General on Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Panel of United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/977, para. 173), recognized the importance of the work done by the Mine Action Service and supported the recommendation to upgrade the Service to a Division, and that its head should be at the Director level (see A/55/1024, para. 79).

104. With regard to the humanitarian activities not directly related to peacekeeping operations, the Secretary-General remains cognizant of the need to ensure that the Mine Action Service has a sound financial basis upon which to carry out its mandate. In reviewing the current situation of the Service, the Secretary-General notes with appreciation the support of donors in response to the increased resource mobilization efforts during 2001. This has placed the Service in a stronger financial position. In these

circumstances, the current arrangement for the financing of the activities of the Mine Action Service should continue to apply and be kept under review. If need be, the Secretary-General would revert to this matter in the future, following established budgetary procedures.

VI. Observations

105. While important progress was made in mine action during this reporting period, the number of countries and areas that require and request assistance in mine action continues to grow. The need to obtain adequate resources in response to these needs remains a constant challenge to the United Nations system. Member States continue to call upon the United Nations system to provide assistance in areas affected by mines and unexploded ordnance, as well as to assist them with the implementation of their treaty obligations, particularly those relating to the clearance of mined areas. The Secretary-General appreciates the commitment and generosity demonstrated by Member States, as well as numerous organizations and individuals outside the United Nations system, and urges them all to redouble their efforts and to support the implementation of the United Nations strategy.

106. While the challenges remain severe, they can be overcome. Dramatic reductions in the production and use of anti-personnel landmines in recent years have opened up the prospect of eliminating the threat of landmines within a definable time frame in some of the world's most severely affected countries. To achieve this will require the sustained commitment of all those involved in this great international effort.

Annex

Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action

A. Total contributions by donor, as at 31 July 2001

Donors	*Payments*	*Pledges*	*Total*
Member and observer States			
Andorra	$31 600.00	$0.00	$31 600.00
Austria	$258 348.24	$0.00	$258 348.24
Australia	$1 345 861.41	$0.00	$1 345 861.41
Belgium	$2 026 274.55	$129 000.00	$2 155 274.55
Brazil	$3 000.00	$0.00	$3 000.00
Cambodia	$1 000.00	$0.00	$1 000.00
Canada	$5 459 400.98	$330 000.00	$5 789 400.98
Croatia	$1 000.00	$0.00	$1 000.00
China	$100 000.00	$0.00	$100 000.00
Czech Republic	$22 500.00	$0.00	$22 500.00
Denmark	$5 819 865.04	$370 000.00	$6 189 865.04
Estonia	$6 000.00	$0.00	$6 000.00
Finland	$512 045.59	$311 000.00	$823 045.59
France	$844 244.92	$0.00	$844 244.92
Germany	$2 780 055.46	$0.00	$2 780 055.46
Greece	$80 000.00	$0.00	$80 000.00
Holy See	$14 000.00	$0.00	$14 000.00
Iceland	$10 000.00	$0.00	$10 000.00
Indonesia	$40 000.00	$0.00	$40 000.00
Ireland	$1 412 366.19	$0.00	$1 412 366.19
Israel	$98 000.00	$0.00	$98 000.00
Italy	$2 188 072.23	$0.00	$2 188 072.23
Japan	$15 917 436.35	$0.00	$15 917 436.35
Liechtenstein	$65 838.02	$0.00	$65 838.02
Luxembourg	$352 753.98	$0.00	$352 753.98
Malta	$1 952.00	$0.00	$1 952.00
Mauritius	$10 000.00	$0.00	$10 000.00
Monaco	$69 629.00	$0.00	$69 629.00
Namibia	$500.00	$0.00	$500.00
Netherlands	$3 099 450.39	$0.00	$3 099 450.39
New Zealand	$734 675.00	$0.00	$734 675.00
Norway	$4 845 852.54	$0.00	$4 845 852.54
Portugal	$159 456.00	$0.00	$159 456.00
Republic of Korea	$605 000.00	$0.00	$605 000.00
San Marino	$14 977.50	$0.00	$14 977.50

Donors	*Payments*	*Pledges*	*Total*
Saudi Arabia	$50 000.00	$0.00	$50 000.00
Slovakia	$10 000.00	$0.00	$10 000.00
Spain	$1 415 973.21	$0.00	$1 415 973.21
Sweden	$1 983 108.41	$0.00	$1 983 108.41
Switzerland	$4 360 922.26	$0.00	$4 360 922.26
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	$5 002 952.57	$0.00	$5 002 952.57
United States of America	$2 677 500.00	$254 397.00	$2 931 897.00
Subtotal 1	**$64 431 611.75**	**$1 394 397.00**	**$65 826 008.75**
Other sources			
European Union	$13 823 307.60	$0.00	$13 823 307.60
Individuals	$6 865.94	$0.00	$6 865.94
Subtotal 2	**$13 830 173.54**	**$0.00**	**$13 830 173.54**
Total 1 and 2	**$78 261 785.29**	**$1 394 397.00**	**$79 656 182.29**

B. Total contributions by earmarking, as at 31 July 2001

Earmarking	*Payments*	*Pledges*	*Total*
Afghanistan	$1 571 090.02	$0.00	$1 571 090.02
Angola	$8 415 841.76	$0.00	$8 415 841.76
Azerbaijan	$500 000.00	$0.00	$500 000.00
Bosnia and Herzegovina	$10 127 866.09	$0.00	$10 127 866.09
Cambodia	$1 060 836.62	$6 000.00	$1 066 836.62
Chad	$479 999.48	$0.00	$479 999.48
Democratic Republic of the Congo	$552 242.61	$0.00	$552 242.61
Croatia	$6 013 276.14	$0.00	$6 013 276.14
Eritrea	$1 412 000.00	$0.00	$1 412 000.00
Eritrea and Ethiopia	$1 934 362.97	$0.00	$1 934 362.97
Guatemala	$230 000.00	$0.00	$230 000.00
Guinea-Bissau	$150 000.00	$0.00	$150 000.00
Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)	$9 967 135.95	$0.00	$9 967 135.95
Lao People's Democratic Republic	$750 000.00	$0.00	$750 000.00
Lebanon	$1 475 724.48	$120 000.00	$1 595 724.48
Mozambique	$5 815 377.35	$0.00	$5 815 377.35
Nicaragua	$747 498.96	$0.00	$747 498.96
Somalia	$363 130.05	$0.00	$363 130.05
Sri Lanka	$59 999.61	$0.00	$59 999.61
Sudan	$449 442.00	$0.00	$449 442.00

Earmarking	*Payments*	*Pledges*	*Total*
Thailand	$492 593.80	$0.00	$492 593.80
Yemen	$2 226 553.21	$0.00	$2 226 553.21
Subtotal, programmes	**$54 794 971.09**	**$126 000.00**	**$54 920 971.09**
Conference, Geneva 07/95	$780 027.19	$0.00	$780 027.19
Conference, Copenhagen 07/96	$119 270.97	$0.00	$119 270.97
Conference, Tokyo 03/97	$155 447.00	$0.00	$155 447.00
Subtotal, conferences	**$1 054 745.16**	**$0.00**	**$1 054 745.16**
Multi-country study	$367 888.64	$0.00	$367 888.64
Mine and UXO safety	$371 063.40	$0.00	$371 063.40
Mine dog study	$124 000.00	$0.00	$124 000.00
Awareness standards	$180 000.00	$0.00	$180 000.00
International standards	$250 000.00	$0.00	$250 000.00
Standby capacity	$300 000.00	$0.00	$300 000.00
IMSMA[a]	$0.00	$100 000.00	$100 000.00
Programme management handbook	$0.00	$154 397.00	$154 397.00
Subtotal, projects	**$1 592 952.04**	**$565 397.00**	**$2 158 349.04**
Headquarters coordination	$7 615 767.50	$345 000.00	$7 960 767.50
Emergencies	$5 889.30	$0.00	$5 889.30
Total earmarked	**$65 064 265.09**	**$1 036 397.00**	**$66 100 662.09**
Unearmarked	$10 656 640.90	$0.00	$10 656 640.90
To be determined	$2 295 682.35	$358 000.00	$2 653 682.35
Total	**$78 016 588.34**	**$1 394 397.00**	**$79 410 985.34**

[a] Information Management System for Mine Action.